



SARATOGA COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY
152 WEST HIGH ST., BALLSTON SPA, NY 12020

SC-VSA

June 3rd, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Mission Update – Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency (VSA)

Mission: To fulfill President Lincoln's promise "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's veterans.

Vision: We will accomplish this by providing quality service, advocacy and counseling for the Veterans of Saratoga County Veteran and their families. In coordination with, other Saratoga county departments, non-government organizations, community based partners and affiliates will make sure our Veterans receive the right services, external assistance and benefits through outreach. The most essential portion of our charter is to ensure that our Veterans, especially those we come in contact with, are treated professionally with dignity and respect.

Lines of Effort:

1. **Veterans Self Sufficiency.** Develop sustainable initiatives where Veterans are able to become self sufficient through the collaborative effort of the Saratoga County Veterans Employment Task Force.
 - a. The Veterans Employment Task Force developed a survey targeting 770 unemployed veterans who are collecting unemployment insurance (UI), or have exhausted their UI.
 - b. A portion of the surveys have been mailed out and the other portion will be e-mailed out in the days to come. No Later Than (NLT): June 1st, 2013 – Dan Perkins will either e-mail or snail mail the survey out. Lisa and Ryan helped problem solve a "saratogacountyny" e-mail for the purpose of Veterans Initiatives.
 - c. On June 12th, 2013 Dan and Kimberly, from the NYS DOL will join me in meeting with the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce HR Council. This meeting is being facilitated by Denise Romeo with intent to discuss the benefits of hiring a Veteran and gaining buy to conduct a Veterans Hiring Conference.
2. **Veterans Justice Outreach.** Develop a program in support of the VA Veterans Justice Outreach in order to provide advocacy and assistance to Veterans in lieu of incarceration or upon release.
 - a. On May 13th, 2013, Courtney (VJO). met with Jim Murphy, District Attorney for Saratoga County, Steven Bayle, Director of Saratoga County Probation.

- b. Jim embraced the mission and agreed to reach out to local judge that would be amiable in establishing a “Veterans’ Court.”
- c. Jim also agreed to allot some time during his annual course for Courtney to give a class regarding the VJO mission and intent.
- d. Jim is going to set up a follow up meeting to discuss protocols on how “we” can identify a person as a Veteran as soon as possible.
- e. Next step is to contact our Sherriff for support.

3. Veterans Peer to Peer Support Program. Develop a cadre of veterans who understand coping with and overcoming the psychological trauma experienced during intense armed conflict. The Veteran lead program will offer will provide training and guidance by professional therapists and facilitators. The Veteran mentors are dedicated to helping their fellow veterans make the necessary adjustments back to day-to-day life.

- a. The program has been operating at a measured pace since 18 January and we are hosting our Kickoff Event on June 13th, at 6:00pm in the NYS Military Museum/Research Center.
- b. All three program will be attending as panel guests for the United Way on June 18th, 2013. This event will give the program more exposure and set the program up for financial support when the State funds are no longer available. An area of focus will be that we are working with the other programs in the Capital District to exchange ideas and our resources.
- c. I will re-evaluate Amy’s performance with regards to her ability to achieve certain key goals for the program at then of this month. Her initial evaluation was conducted on May 2nd, 2013. We have adjusted our goals as follows:
 - 1) We did have 2 pairs and now have 0.
 - 2) No Later than (NLT) 30 May 2013, Recruit a “Peer to Peer Program Volunteer Leader.” This Combat Veteran will be the “Face” of the program and lead the program with the program coordinator under the guidance of the VSA Director.
 - As today, 3 June 2012, this person will be me. I am in contact with Liz Hitt from HATAS to possibly share the responsibility.
 - 3) NLT 15 June 2013, Develop a “Peer to Peer Mentor/Leader Certification Process.” This will support the training requirement established by the State.
 - Shift to June 30th, 2013
 - 4) NLT 1 July 2013, Plan, coordinate and conduct monthly “Peer to Peer” social events. The intent will be to promote the program, and our Veterans. The events will encourage or Veterans/Peers to create relationships through a common bound and have fun!

➤ Shift to July 15th, 2013

- 5) NLT 1 August 2013, Develop monthly “Peer to Peer Mentor/Leader” training events. These events can be in support of the certification process or as stand-alone events.

➤ Shift to August 1st, 2013

- 6) NLT 1 January 2014, the program will have 15 sets of pairs.

- 7) NLT 1 May 2014, the program will have 30 sets of pairs.

4. Veterans Benefits Outreach initiative. Develop a program where a Veteran’s Service Officer deploys to the cities and towns of Veterans unable to travel to the VSA in order to reduce the risk of these Veterans of not receiving their deserved services and benefits.

- On April 22nd, 2013 Frank was given the task of analyzing the need and to develop three course of action in support of this initiative. He has been able to accomplish this task due to lack experience and knowledge in developing this type of undertaking. I will take a deeper approach to this task and have a plan ready by July.

5. Veterans Trust Fund Initiative. Plan, coordinate and execute social events in order to promote our Veterans and raise money for our Veterans Trust fund.

- a. We are going to begin planning the Veterans Day 5K Run in coordination with members of the YMCA and other fitness clubs.
- b. We are waiting for the County Attorney for his opinion regarding the liability of the event.
- c. The United Way has pledged their support to assist in Marketing and Possibly fund raising for this program. We also discussed the possibility of establishing a larger trust fund to support other areas and agencies.
- d. Amy Amoroso has provided me the name of a “crowd funding” organization. I will coordinate a meeting with him and Ryan to verify if this is a viable method to support our trust fund.

6. Saratoga County Veteran’s Alliance. Establish an Alliance of Veterans that are business or community leaders in order to mass our collective resources and abilities on targeted veterans issues introduced to the Alliance.

- I am still meeting with individuals to build a core group to include business members of the Chamber and recommendations from Roy McDonald.

7. Point of contact for this action is Felipe C. Moon, Veterans’ Services Agency, Director, fmoon@saratogacountyny.gov, or 518-884-4116.

FELIPE C. MOON
Veterans' Service Agency
Director